



Kootenai National Forest
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News Release

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Kootenai National Forest Fire Update for August 18

LIBBY, Mont. August 18, 2015 3:00 p.m. – With the potential for windy conditions beginning on Friday, fire fighters are working to get as many fires under control as possible. Progress is being made on incidents both on the National Forest and on state lands. With fires burning across the Northwest, resources are being carefully managed so that the necessary work can be accomplished. The safety of the public and the firefighters is of the utmost concern.

One new fire was detected Monday evening on state land near Fisher Mountain, increasing the fire count on state land to nine while the count on the National Forest remained the same at 52 fires. Stage II Fire Restrictions will go into effect at 0001 on Thursday morning. More information regarding those restrictions will be available in an accompanying news release.

Following is an update on fire activity by district on the National Forest, as well as a fire update for state lands.

Location: Rexford/Fortine Ranger Districts

Jurisdiction: United States Forest Service

Values at risk: Several fires on both districts are in difficult terrain (Barnaby Fire, Sunday Fire), requiring increased caution on behalf of firefighters.

Fire activity: The Northeast Kootenai Complex continues to be managed by Shawn Pearson's Type 2 Team. The Marston Fire (2000 acres) has grown a little larger but is not overly active; line construction is continuing. The Barnaby Fire (10 acres) is still being monitored by crew members from the Flathead Hotshots. Helicopter support was able to drop water on it yesterday, slowing its growth. The Sunday Fire is burning in difficult terrain and is being managed through the use of heavy equipment to construct fire line. The fire is active but holding at approximately 160 acres. Two Type 1 crews are assigned to this fire today which will improve control of the fire and speed suppression. The Dunn Fire has been 100% contained at 70 acres. Crews will remain on the fire for mop-up and patrol. Fire line has been

established around the full perimeter of the Weigel Fire and it is 50% contained. Mop-up efforts will continue until full containment.

Fire management outside the Northeast Kootenai Complex is progressing as well. The Pinto Point Fire (28 acres) has been completely surrounded by fire line. The Ural 3 Fire grew slightly (0.25 acres) and firefighters will be assessing it today. The Tween Fire (2.5 acres) is anticipated to be under control by today. Two fires that started yesterday, West Fortine and Helmer, benefited from aggressive initial attack and both are under control as of today.

There is a public meeting tonight in Trego at 7:00 p.m. at the Trego Civic Center.

Location: Trout Creek Ranger District

Jurisdiction: United States Forest Service

Values at risk: The group of fires that include Napoleon, Star Gulch, Hamilton, and Government are burning near private property and structures. The Berray Fire could potentially damage the Berray Mountain Lookout and repeater site.

Fire activity: The Napoleon Fires experienced some activity last night, and hotshot crews are working to construct fire line and reduce fuels at the boundaries between Forest Service and private property. Structure protection has been completed and perimeter control line around all nearby homes is being constructed today. More equipment is arriving to assist with fire line construction. All of the Napoleon Fires are being managed by the local Type 3 Team. Fires included in the Napoleon area are the Hamilton Fire (150 acres), Star Gulch Fire (100 acres), Napoleon Fire (previously 1 and 2, now also includes Pillick and Pillick 2 fires at 250 acres total), Napoleon 3 Fire (35 acres) and Government Mountain Fire (140 acres).

Apart from the Napoleon Fires, district firefighters are working on the Lone Cliff Fire today (3 acres). There are several days of work ahead to completely control it. The Elk Mountain Fire (1.2 acres) is controlled and the district is monitoring the Poplar Point Fire (225 acres), Berray Fire (200 acres), Chippewa Fire (100 acres), and Vimy Fire (7 acres). The Berray Fire was originally Berray 1 and Berray 2, but they have now been combined.

There is a public meeting tonight in Noxon at 6:00 p.m. at the Noxon Fire Hall.

Location: Three Rivers Ranger District

Jurisdiction: United States Forest Service

Fire activity: The Teepee Mountain fire has grown to 80 acres and 22 firefighters are assigned there to work on containment and keep the fire from burning over the ridge into the Pine Creek Drainage. Fire retardant was also used yesterday and today to help with suppression. The Cyclone Fire (18 acres) has been completely contained by fire line. Firefighters are applying water to cool the area and complete suppression. The Teepee Trail Fire is under control and a plan for suppression is being developed for the Sawtooth Fire (200 acres) as more resources become available.

Location: Libby Ranger District

Jurisdiction: United States Forest Service

Values at risk: Timber

Fire activity: The Midas Creek Fire (6 acres) is contained and has 12 firefighters managing it today. All three Blue Mountain Fires are under control and being monitored. The Klatawah Fire (200 acres) in the Cabinet Mountains Wilderness continues to burn but is not showing substantial growth. It is being monitored and a suppression plan has been developed.

Location: State Office, Libby

Jurisdiction: Department of Natural Resources

Fire activity: The Fisher Mountain Fire was detected Monday evening at an estimated 10 acres; it has since grown to approximately 40 acres. Fire retardant was used to help suppress the fire yesterday evening. It has been completely surrounded by bull dozer constructed fire line and crews are hoping to have it controlled before the afternoon heat sets in today.

Updates will be released as more information becomes available.

Kootenai Interagency Dispatch Website

<http://gacc.nifc.gov/nrcc/dc/mtkdc/INDEX.HTM>

InciWeb – Wildfire Information

<http://inciweb.nwcg.gov/state/27/>

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